

John 20:1-10, 19-31
"Results Of The Resurrection"

Having begun the book of Genesis, we spoke briefly of the "Romance of Redemption". We spoke for a bit about what was going on *before* Genesis 1:1. The bible declares that, "In the beginning God created the heavens & the earth." ... But what was going on *before* God created the heavens & the earth, what was God up to throughout the "history of eternity"?

We know that God doesn't act arbitrarily, that He doesn't shoot from the hip or act impulsively. So by the very nature that He created this *universe*, this *planet* & the *people* on it, that implies to us that God had some sort of a grand plan, a purpose for all of this... & the bible teaches that there *has been* an *eternal* purpose in the heart of God, & it's given to us in the book of Eph in the 1st Ch & the 10th Vs. It says this, "...that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him."¹ It's as though God wrote out this enormously complex problem on the "blackboard" of the universe & the "sum of it all" the "answer to it all" was resolved in J.C.

So the mission & mandate of Jesus was indeed *foreordained before the foundation of the world* (1 Pet 1:20), but was manifest in these last times for you & me. Because there *was a problem* wasn't there? We call it the "sin dilemma", God created the heavens & the earth & all the things contained therein & said that it was good. But man marred creation, created a *separation* between God & himself through sin & since sin creates a gap, now we have a problem. How can sinful man bridge the gap to a holy/righteous God? *There's a chasm between God & man that's impossible for us to bridge because to have a relationship w/God, God demands perfection (He can't compromise His holy nature or He's no longer holy), but since man is marred by sin from the moment of conception we can never span the gap...* As the bible says, "*Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.*"²

God didn't breach the relationship, man did that, but once it was done man couldn't fix it. So God took the initiative (because He loves you) to make a way for you (& me) to know Him, to be made right w/Him & be put in a perfect position *before* Him once again.

He would solve the "sin dilemma" in the Person of J.C. (It's the Romance of Redemption).

¹ The New King James Version. (1982). [Eph 1:10]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² The New King James Version. (1982). [Is 59:1-2]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

So the mission was set, God Himself would become a man in the Person of J.C. (not conceived of natural means or else the sin nature would be present). The prophet Isaiah declares, *"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel."*³ Which translates, *God w/us*. When we flash forward to Luke's gospel the angel that appears to Mary fills in a few details as to how that would happen. He said, *"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God."*⁴

Born through Mary He would be 100% human, being conceived of the Holy Spirit He would be 100% God & He would become the sinless sacrifice for the sin of the world, He would be the way by which the gap between sinful man & a perfect & righteous God would be bridged. He made the definitive statement, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*⁵

He was (as they say) a Man on a mission. So He went about doing good, ministering to multitudes, miracle after miracle defining Him, declaring Him, He came to seek & to save that which was lost, to bind up the broken & strengthen what was sick, a bruised reed He would not break & a smoking flax He would not quench. **He didn't come to condemn the world, to squash the one who was hopeless/hurting, He came to bring healing, to bring hope, that the world through Him might be saved...**

But no matter what He did, it never seemed to be enough for the religious skeptic. "What sign will You perform that we might believe You?", they would say. ("Well, I've healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, made lepers whole, caused the deaf to hear, the lame to leap for joy & the mute to shout the praises of God. **I've fed multitudes from a few fish, walked on water, calmed storms w/a word, cast out demons & raised the dead. If that don't convince you nothing will!**") That's what I would've said 😊!

But not Jesus; He said things like, *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."*⁶ He said, *"A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."*⁷ A reference to the fact that even as Jonah was 3 days in the belly of the great fish but "surfaced" alive; even so He would be in the heart of the earth for 3 days & on the 3rd day He would "surface" alive, death unable to keep Him down. (You see the wages of sin is death, but since Jesus never sinned, death couldn't hold Him).

³ The New King James Version. (1982). [Is 7:14]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴ The New King James Version. (1982). [Lk 1:35]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁵ The New King James Version. (1982). [Jn 14:6]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁶ The New King James Version. (1982). [Jn 2:19]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁷ The New King James Version. (1982). [Mt 16:4]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Jesus pushed all His chips forward, went “all in” on one thing. He said (in essence [to the religious leaders]), “You’ll take Me, & turn Me over to Rome who will crucify Me & put Me to death. But if on that 3rd day I don’t rise from the dead, you can take everything I’ve ever said, everything I’ve ever done & throw it in the trash because at that point I’m nothing more than a liar who should be discredited on every level.” ---

Paul the apostle said that the totality of the Christian faith rests upon 1 footing, 1 foundation; & if you could place the dynamite of discrediting at *that point* & explode the foundation, then you would bring the entire Christian faith down in a heap of rubble... You’ve seen demolition teams implode a building, a few strategically placed explosive charges around the foundation & the entire structure collapses in on itself.

Paul made known to any would be skeptic that the Achilles heel of Christianity rests in one thing... The resurrection of J.C. If you can dismantle that, if you can disprove that, than you will w/one fell swoop topple the entirety of Christianity. Remember these words? *“But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.”⁸*

Hey, if there’s no resurrection than *what are we doing here?* We must be by far the most foolish folks on the planet. We may as well go eat, drink, drain this life dry of all the personal pleasure we can & then die because if Christ is not risen there’s nothing else... But Christ *is* risen...

...By the time we come to this text Jesus has been *snagged*; He’s been *sentenced*, He’s been *beaten & scourged* (which amounts to being filleted alive by the Roman flagellum [a short whip w/a few leather strands attached to it which would have fragments of bronze or bone embedded in them]). Sometimes the flagellum would have a hook at the end of it...

Ultimately His body being reduced to ribbons of quivering flesh w/muscle & bone (if not entrails) exposed.

⁸ The New King James Version. (1982). (1 Co 15:13-19). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

One church historian writes, “For they say that the bystanders were struck with amazement when they saw them lacerated with scourges even to the innermost veins and arteries, so that the hidden inward parts of the body, both their bowels and their members, were exposed to view.” (Eusebius of Caesarea, Ecclesiastical History, Book 4, chap. 15).

The prophet Isaiah tells us, *“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”*⁹ & There upon the cross He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God through faith in Him. The bible teaches us that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.

The means by which man meant to *destroy* Christ, in reality was means by which He would *save* man; therein lies the wisdom of God...

The disciples were dispersed, Jesus was dead & Joseph of Arimathea (along w/Nicodemus) (w/Pilates permission) took the body of Jesus, wrapped it in strips of linen, laid it in the tomb & the stone was put in place. *They set a Roman squad in place to safeguard the tomb so that His disciples wouldn't try to steal the body & they sealed the tomb. The deal was sealed, literally. (To break the seal was to end your life, which is undoubtedly one more reason why the disciples were freaking out on Sunday morning when Jesus was missing because they figured they'd come looking for them 1st).*

Let's look together at the eyewitness account. John 20:1-9

Vs 1-2

Question: was she expecting a resurrection? No! None of them were, or they'd have been there to receive Him before sun up. She didn't burst in shouting, “Hallelujah, the Lord is risen indeed!” She was disheveled, she was & in disarray, “The body of the Lord has been moved & we don't know where to!!!”

Vs 3-10

You can see the scene in your minds eye can't you? Mary bursts, panic-stricken into the place where Peter & John were staying, she's talking about the body of Jesus being gone, she doesn't know where it's been taken; they instantly spring up & out of the house & take off running to the tomb. Now for some reason it's important to John for you to know that he was faster than Peter (seems like a personal dig to me, but what do I know ☺).

⁹ The New King James Version. (1982). [Is 53:5-6] Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

But he arrived at the tomb, stooped down to look in & what he saw staggered him, the linen cloths were lying there in full form, they weren't scattered & thrown throughout the tomb, they were right there where the body should be, but there was no body...

Peter (in standard form, in classic fashion), when *he* got to the tomb didn't say excuse me or ask John to step aside politely, he pushed John aside immediately & went in. & What he saw blew his mind, there were the linen cloths lying right there where Jesus used to be, & beyond that the handkerchief that had covered his face had been wrapped up, folded neatly & set off to the side. This wasn't the scene of a fast paced, fury infused grave robbery, this was something done out of careful calculation, almost a premeditation. There was no concern for being discovered in what took place, who ever did this took their time.

Then John came in & saw. It's interesting the words used for "saw" in this passage are actually 3 different Greek words. The 1st word "Blepo" means about what it sounds like, it's a "bleep", you just see it, nothing more than simple observation. The 2nd word "Theoreo" from which our word "theory" comes from, it's speaking of consideration, thinking it through, to survey the situation. Finally John comes in & it's the word, "eido" almost like our word "idea" & it means to discern, or to perceive w/understanding. This was John's "light bulb" moment. It all made sense, he was connecting the dots, doing the math & it was adding up, "He's risen!"

Vs 9

I love the transparency of the scriptures. These aren't men who want you to think that they had it all figured out, never had a doubt, they were clueless! Even though Jesus had told them, it just didn't make sense. Listen, I've seen death & I've seen it come to people in many different ways & in different forms. (Now I've never seen death by crucifixion, that I can only imagine & at that my most vivid imagination would certainly fall radically short). But regardless of how it comes it carries a common thread & that is *finality*. When you see death, you don't expect to see life spring forth *from* it.

These guys *did not* expect to see Jesus (physically/bodily) again. They didn't know the Scripture, that He *must* rise again from the dead. The Scripture had declared, "I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.'"¹⁰

¹⁰ The New King James Version. (1982). [Ps 2:7]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

In the book of Acts Paul made it clear that this Vs is not a reference to Jesus coming forth from the womb, but from the tomb. Jesus was begotten from the dead, the 1st born from the dead verifying the fact that He was indeed the Son of God. & Again, *"...my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life;"*¹¹ He had to rise from the dead, the integrity & validity of the word of God & His own prophecy was resting on it.

So... minds being blown, Peter & John returned to their homes.

Vs 19-23

Evidently they had gone "underground", they were meeting in an undisclosed location, they were cowering behind locked doors for fear of the religious leaders, they were all worried that they would share the same fate as their Lord if they were found; but Jesus knew right where they were.

We note here the fact that the resurrection body doesn't share the same restrictions as these bodies, for Jesus to appear to them behind closed doors posed no problems at all. He was simply/suddenly in their midst & He shared w/them a message. "Peace be w/you." It wasn't, "Hey, where were you guys when I needed you? You all *left Me*, you all *denied Me*, when I was there upon the cross you fled & forsook Me." There was none of that; the message of the resurrection is one of Peace to you. Christ has reconciled us to God having made peace w/God through the blood of His cross (Col 1:20).

He shows them His hands & His side (that had been pierced w/a spear) & He said, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." "You're going to continue down this path that I have pioneered." How was Jesus sent? He was sent as a light, Jesus said, "I am the light of the world, & he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." (John 8:12) He was sent not to do His own will but the will of the Father who sent Him. He was sent to serve & to sacrifice Himself for the sake of others, He was sent to teach God's word, preach repentance & be an example of God's ways. "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

We're to continue His mission, preaching repentance, teaching God's word, being an example of God's ways, we're to serve others, lay ourselves aside & be the light of the world that others might see Him & be drawn to Him through His work in our lives...

¹¹ The New King James Version. (1982). (Ps 16:9-11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Then He breathed on them (reminiscent of the creation of Adam, now we're seeing a new creation; if anyone be in Christ they're a new creation...) & said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." He gives His disciples the authority to announce forgiveness & to warn of guilt. *We have a responsibility to let people know that if you turn from your sin & trust in J.C. you will be forgiven by God, but if you choose to remain in your sin, if you don't receive J.C. but reject J.C. than your sins are retained & you choose to forfeit the mercy of God in Christ.*

Vs 24-29

Thomas missed church ☺ & it so doing missed & radical revelation of J.C.! Don't forsake the assembling together of the saints. Jesus didn't go to Thomas' house, He showed up in the midst of the congregation & it was radical!

*But we note that Thomas didn't believe the report; now in many ways Thomas is a good example to us. He wasn't fake, if he didn't get it, he didn't pretend to, but when he *did* get it, he went all in, "my Lord & my God!"*

Which btw is obviously another underscoring of the deity of J.C. In Acts Ch 10 when Peter went to Cornelius' house, Cornelius fell at his feet. Peter said, "Hey, stand up, I'm just a man like you!" When the people of Lystra began to worship Paul & Barnabas, they tore their clothes & said, "Stop, we're flesh & blood, no different than you!" *When John fell down before the angel in the book of Rev the angel stopped him & said, "Worship God." But when Thomas fell down before Jesus & said, "my Lord & my God!" Jesus didn't say, "Hey, don't say that!" Or "Thomas, don't get carried away!" He received the worship, & there's a reason for that, because He's God.*

Now many times we feel as though we're at a disadvantage because we didn't get to see this. But Jesus says, "No way, there's a special blessing reserved especially for the ones who've *not* seen, yet believe."

Vs 30-31

The resurrection... what are some of the things we can glean, some results that we see from its reality?

Perhaps most obviously we can see that the resurrection of J.C. provides the solution to the "sin dilemma", it *eliminates death*. Death is swallowed up in victory. Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"*¹²

¹² The New King James Version. (1982). [Jn 11:25-26]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

It's the single most pivotal, important question you will ever answer, all of eternity hangs in the balance.

Something else the resurrection does is that it *deals w/doubt*. Jesus made Himself real to Thomas in a personal way & when Jesus makes Himself real to you in a personal way it deals w/your doubt. J.C. conquerors our unbelief.

The resurrection reminds us that Jesus knows right where we're at & that *we're never alone*. They didn't give Him the memo of where they were meeting, but He knew *exactly* where they were & He showed up in their midst. They didn't send Him a telegram of what Thomas had said, but He *knew* exactly what Thomas said & spoke to him from his own words. In Christ you will never be alone; never left, never forsaken.

4^{thly}. finally the resurrection *transforms lives*; these men went from a band of defeated cowards cowering in an upper room, to a company that no persecution could silence. That doesn't happen because you fabricated a story. That happens because you've encountered the risen Savior & He's unleashed the power of His Spirit upon your life!

Charles Colson (having become a Christian) speaks out on the Watergate scandal & the resurrection & he says this. "I know the resurrection is a fact, and Watergate proved it to me. How? Because 12 men (including Paul) testified they had seen Jesus raised from the dead, then they proclaimed that truth for 40 years, never once denying it. Every one was beaten, tortured, stoned and put in prison. They would not have endured that if it weren't true. Watergate embroiled 12 of the most powerful men in the world-and they couldn't keep a lie for three weeks. You're telling me 12 apostles could keep a lie for 40 years? Absolutely impossible." He said, "Take it from one who was inside the Watergate web looking out, who saw firsthand how vulnerable a cover-up is: Nothing less than a witness as awesome as the resurrected Christ could have caused those men to maintain to their dying whispers that Jesus is alive and Lord."

Carefully thought through fabrications don't empower people & change lives; however the resurrected Christ will do just that. Let's take our place w/Thomas at the feet of Jesus & there proclaim, "my Lord & my God!" J.C. is risen from the dead, death is swallowed up in victory... believe on the Lord J.C. & receive life in His name!

Prayer Points:

Lord Jesus we believe in You, You are our Lord, You are our God... We thank You for Your love for us, Your willingness to suffer in our place that we might find salvation in You.

J.C. was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. If you've not received J.C. don't be unbelieving, but believing. God has loved you w/an everlasting love & Jesus died upon the cross, shed His blood that you might be forgiven of all your sin & reconciled to God through faith in Him. Turn from your sin, trust in J.C.